

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)	
)	
Plaintiff,)	
)	20-cv-1974 (WMW/KMM)
v.)	
)	
REESE PFEIFFER; JEANNE PFEIFFER;)	
MICHAEL FRUEN; JEREMY MARTINEAU;)	
FRUEN & PFEIFFER, LLP; AND M. FRUEN)	
PROPERTIES, LLC,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

SHATARA BROWN, NIKOE LEE, AND)	
COLLEANA YOUNG,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,)	
)	19-cv-3132 (WMW/KMM)
v.)	
)	
REESE PFEIFFER, FRUEN & PFEIFFER)	
LLP, MICHAEL FRUEN, AND)	
M FRUEN PROPERTIES, LLC,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

JOINT MOTION FOR ENTRY OF CONSENT DECREE

The parties respectfully jointly move this Court to enter the proposed Consent Decree attached as Exhibit 1 in the above-captioned matters. The proposed Consent Decree has been fully executed by the parties.

1. This Court has jurisdiction over these matters under 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and 42 U.S.C. § 3614(a).

2. On December 19, 2019, Plaintiffs Shatara Brown, Nikoe Lee, and Colleana Young filed Civil Action 19-cv-3132 (WMW/KMM) under Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, 42 U.S.C. § 3613, alleging sexual harassment in housing against Defendants Reese Pfeiffer, Fruen & Pfeiffer LLP, Michael Fruen, and M Fruen Properties, LLC.

3. On September 16, 2020, the United States of America filed Civil Action 20-cv-1974 (WMW/KMM) to enforce Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (the Fair Housing Act), 42 U.S.C. §§ 3601-3631. The United States alleges that Reese Pfeiffer, acting as an agent of Defendants Jeanne Pfeiffer, Michael Fruen, Jeremy Martineau, Fruen & Pfeiffer, LLP, and M. Fruen Properties, LLC, violated the Fair Housing Act (FHA) by discriminating against prospective tenants and tenants on the basis of sex in the rental of dwellings owned by Defendants, and managed by Reese Pfeiffer, in and around Minneapolis, MN. Specifically, the United States alleges that from at least 2009 through the present, Reese Pfeiffer subjected multiple female tenants to severe, pervasive, and unwelcome sexual harassment and retaliation, including but not limited to the following:

- a. Coercing or pressuring female tenants to engage in sexual acts to obtain or keep their housing;
- b. Making unwelcome sexual comments, propositions, and sexual advances to female tenants;
- c. Subjecting female tenants to unwelcome sexual contact, including but not limited to, touching female tenants' breasts and genitals;

- d. Offering to grant tangible housing benefits—such as providing a rental opportunity or overlooking or excusing late or unpaid rent or utilities – in exchange for sex or sex acts;
- e. Taking or threatening to take adverse housing actions, such as eviction, against female tenants who objected to and/or refused sexual advances;
- f. Expressing a preference for renting to single female tenants; and
- g. Making intrusive and at times unannounced visits to female tenants’ homes to further his sexual advances.

4. The United States alleges that the conduct described above constitutes a pattern or practice of resistance to the full enjoyment of rights granted by the FHA and denial to a group of persons of rights granted by the FHA, which denial raises an issue of general public importance.

5. The United States further alleges that Jeanne Pfeiffer, Michael Fruen, Jeremy Martineau, Fruen & Pfeiffer, LLP, and M. Fruen Properties, LLC are liable for discriminatory actions and conduct committed by their agent Reese Pfeiffer.

6. Defendants deny the allegations of the private plaintiffs and the United States, and specifically deny that the conduct of any Defendant constitutes sexual harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or a violation of the FHA. This Consent Decree is entered into as a compromise of disputed claims, and is not an admission of liability by any Defendant, and is not to be construed as an admission of liability.

7. The proposed Consent Decree resolves the claims asserted by plaintiffs in both matters, with the exception of claims for attorneys' fees in case number 19-cv-3132, as set forth in paragraph 42 of the proposed Consent Decree.

8. The parties recommend, and respectfully request that this Court enter the attached proposed Consent Decree in both matters captioned above.

(SIGNATURE PAGES FOLLOW)

FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

Dated: August 23, 2021

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Dated: August 23, 2021

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